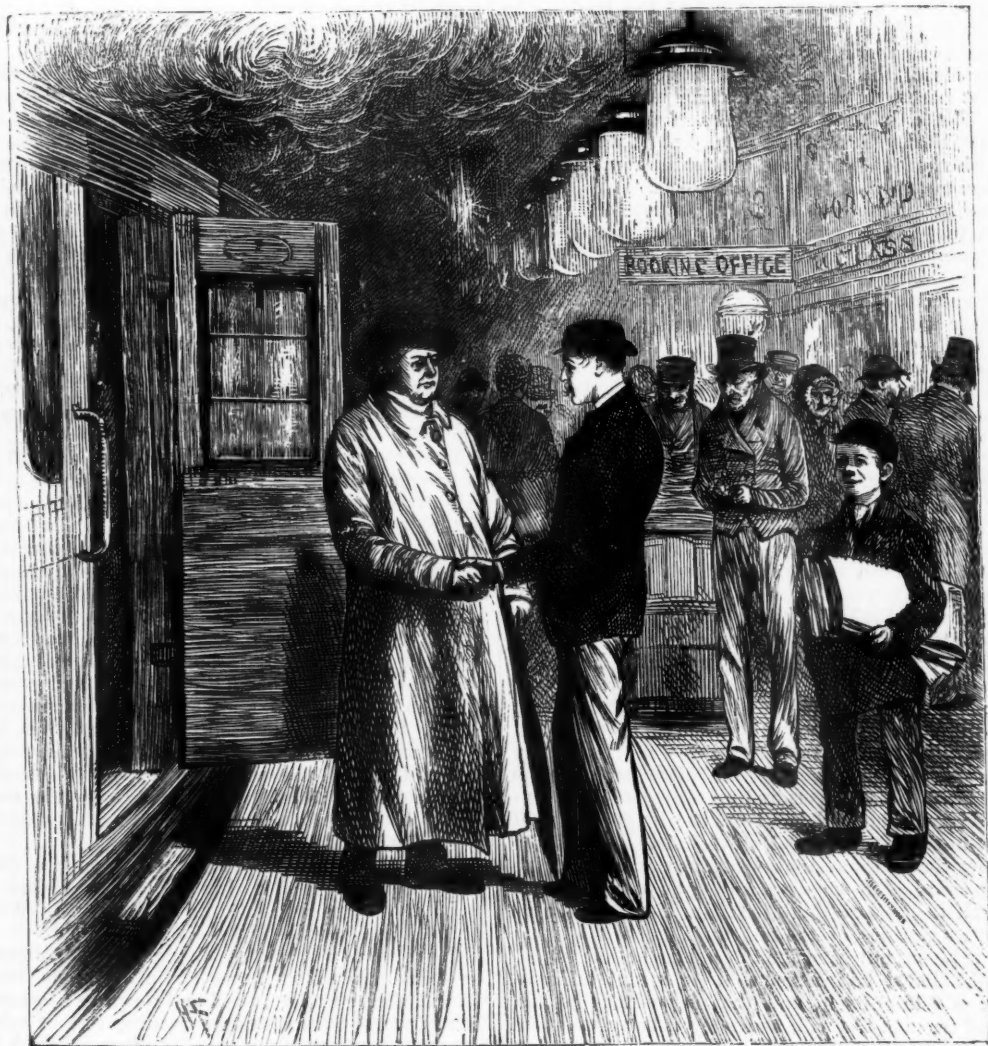


THE LEISURE HOUR.

BEHOLD IN THESE WHAT LEISURE HOURS DEMAND,
AMUSEMENT AND TRUE KNOWLEDGE HAND IN HAND.—*Cowper.*



GOOD-BYE

NINE-TENTHS OF THE LAW.

CHAPTER XLII.—VISIONS OF THE NIGHT.

I had a dream which was not all a dream.

—Byron.

THE important day which was expected to decide the question of ownership in regard to the Thickthorn property was at hand. The law has many delays, and ample time was given to Arthur Neville and his friend Michael Brownlow to enjoy

pleasant intimacies at Brighton, and to return with the rest of the party to their homes; but at length they were summoned again to London, where was a great gathering of lawyers and others interested in the approaching trial. The witnesses were few, and the evidence they had to offer was scanty, but every one who was supposed to be able to give any bias to the question, however slight, had been sought out by the solicitors on either side and brought together, where they could be found when wanted. The

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PRICE ONE PENNY.

mutilated will, on which alone Arthur Neville's claim depended, had been examined word by word, letter by letter, and stroke by stroke, by experts, who had made their reports thereon, and who were further to give, in open court and under cross-examination, the reasons for their conclusions, and also some account of the steps by which they had arrived at them.

Arthur Neville and his friends, foremost among whom was Mr. Brownlow, met together for a last consultation on the evening before the trial. The aspect of affairs was then discussed, and it was by no means a cheering one. The search for witnesses or proofs of the late squire's intentions had been almost barren of result. Nothing new had turned up. Not only were nine-tenths of the law still on Henry Neville-Thornton's side, but it was doubtful whether so much as one-tenth remained for Arthur upon which to build his hopes.

And yet there was a general agreement among those who had known the late squire that he had always intended to leave the estate to his younger nephew. Many of the tenants were ready and willing to depose on oath that such was their belief. But, however well founded their impressions might be, they had nothing beyond their impressions to declare, and such evidence as they were prepared to give would, it was foreseen, melt away immediately under the calm scrutiny of the judge and the cross-examination of the opposite counsel. The late squire had not been in the habit of talking much about his property or his intentions, and it was rather by putting this and that together—a word here and a hint there—than from any positive statement from his own lips that the general conclusion in favour of Arthur Neville had been arrived at. Such desultory and hearsay evidence could not be of value in a court of law, nor would it have much effect, if any, in helping to the interpretation of the mutilated will.

"Mr. Webb could have helped us," Fellowes, the lawyer from Nobottle, said, perhaps for the tenth time; "Mr. Webb could have told us something, no doubt, if he had been alive. Old Mr. Thornton used to say more to him than to any one else. It is very unfortunate that he should have died just when he did. He might have cleared up the case for us considerably. If he had lived a little longer the will might never have been cut up as it is. There was a legacy for him, and that, I suppose, was one of the things that had to be altered after he was gone. I am half inclined to think that Mr. Thornton meant to leave a charge of some sort upon the estate to his elder nephew, but from the alterations he has made, it might almost be inferred that he meant to leave him the estate itself, and that is contrary to the general tenor of the will, and to everything we know about it. In short, although my own opinion on the main question is clear and decided, it seems next to impossible for any one to make head or tail of the document. It was a great pity he began to alter it without first speaking to his solicitor."

"You have looked through Mr. Webb's papers, of course?" one of them asked.

"There are none to look through—none of any consequence," was the answer. "Everything was sorted after his death, and his relatives took charge of all his private papers. We have had access to those, and find nothing of any utility. Documents referring to the estate were sent to Thickthorn; we have been through them carefully, but there is not a line that can help us."

"Well," said Mr. Brownlow, with a sigh, "we shall know soon how it will turn out. It was better to bring it to the proof and have it settled. We have done what we could, and must leave the result now with Him who knows everything and can bring all things to light."

"True," said Fellowes, "that is the right view to take of it, of course. Still, if we could have had Mr. Webb here—if Mr. Webb had been alive—he could have helped us."

"We can do without Mr. Webb," said Brownlow, inspired with a better reliance.

"It might have made all the difference, however, if he had been alive," Fellowes persisted. "It would be almost enough to bring him back again, if only he could know the critical state of the case; but that, of course, he doesn't. He was very much attached to the old squire, and very careful of his interests. I think I see him now, sitting in his elbow-chair with his papers before him. Ah, yes! he'd come back if he could, to give evidence on our side, I'm certain."

It was a quaint idea, and it clung to Mr. Brownlow. He also had known Mr. Webb intimately, and could easily realise the picture which Fellowes had called up.

"It's true enough," he said to himself; "Mr. Webb could have helped us if he had been alive, no doubt."

That night Mr. Brownlow was restless, and lay awake on his narrow and uncomfortable bed at the hotel, counting the hours. The noise in the streets disturbed him. It was late, and the sound of heavy and continuous traffic had ceased; but as often as he closed his eyes the rattling of a cab in the distance, approaching and reverberating under his window, and then dying away in the distance, woke him up again. Anxiety about the result of to-morrow's trial also helped to keep him from sleep. It was chiefly owing to his advice that Arthur Neville had gone on with the case under the discouraging circumstances, and he felt the responsibility of having given him such counsel. The costs would be heavy; and though he would willingly have taken a portion of the burden upon himself if the suit should be lost, yet he knew very well that Arthur Neville would not allow him to do anything of the kind.

"Mr. Webb could have helped us; it's a great pity," he murmured to himself, as he yielded at length to fatigue, and fell into a doze; "Mr. Webb could—Webb could—Webb—Webb—Webb—"

The scene now seemed to change, and Mr. Brownlow found himself at home again at Windy Gorse. He was sitting up late, tired and sleepless; he heard himself yawn, with a strange rattling sort of noise. The room, strange to say, was like that in which he and his friends had assembled a short time before in their London hotel. The same company was there also, and they were all talking together in excited tones about Mr. Webb. Mr. Webb's name fell upon his ear again and again, bandied about, as it seemed, from one speaker to another, now in louder tones, now dying away like the noise of musketry in the distance, or—like the rattling of cab-wheels upon the stones.

Presently these sounds ceased; the company had disappeared, and Mr. Brownlow was alone; the room, too, was changed, and looked more like his own sitting-room at the Gorse; and yet the next moment he was not alone, for Mr. Webb was sitting at the table, turning

over some papers, just as Mr. Fellowes had described him. It did not seem at all strange that he should be there, occupying the place which had once been familiar to him, though the chair had been vacant only a minute before, and he had not been seen to enter the room. He did not speak, and Mr. Brownlow sat looking at him for some minutes, also in silence. Then Mr. Webb rose, and went to a bureau which stood in a recess by the fireplace and opened the front, which let down to write upon. There were drawers within it, and he opened first one and then another, as if looking for something he had mislaid. There was one drawer in particular, which stuck, and would only open half-way, and Mr. Webb kept on pulling at it with a succession of jerks. The noise he made was again like the rattling of wheels over the stones, and awoke Mr. Brownlow.

There was really nothing in this dream that need have given rise to a moment's thought or speculation after it was over; and Mr. Brownlow, on first awaking, did not give much heed to it. He had often seen Mr. Webb go to that bureau while he was alive, and nothing could be more natural than that the conversation which had occurred just before he went to bed, and the thoughts which had troubled him while lying awake, should revive such an image as this in his sleep. The bureau itself and its peculiarities were well known to Mr. Brownlow, for it was still in its old place at Windy Gorse. It had been made for the recess in which it stood, and belonged to the house, as a kind of fixture. The late squire had provided it for his steward as a convenient receptacle for papers relating to the estate. Mr. Chamberlain, when he moved to the Grange, had talked of taking it with him, but it was not a handsome piece of furniture, being of plain oak and unpolished, and Mrs. Chamberlain could find no convenient place for it. There was a small drawer in it which it was always rather troublesome to pull open, but there was no difficulty in getting things in and out of it, and Mr. Brownlow knew that it contained nothing but such articles as he had himself put into it.

Mr. Brownlow had other snatches of sleep and other broken dreams before the day dawned; and all the visions had some bearing more or less direct upon the cause in which he was so deeply interested. He forgot what they were. But this dream of the old steward and his bureau came back to him, and seemed to gather strength, instead of fading away, as such impressions usually do. He did not, however, think it worth repeating to any one; he would have been ashamed to talk of such trifles, and soon the more serious business of the day engaged his attention, and for a time banished the dream from his mind.

CHAPTER XLII.—IN COURT.

Cannot a plain man live and think no harm,
But thus his simple truth must be abused
By sliken, sly, insinuating Jacks?

—Shakespeare.

ALTHOUGH it was necessary for Arthur Neville and his friends to be in attendance when the court opened, there were other cases on the list to be taken before theirs. These occupied the court until past noon, and then there was an interval for luncheon. When the case was at length opened it proceeded quickly. The main question now to be decided was, whether the testator, in altering and defacing his will, had or

had not intended to revoke it. There was no doubt that the will had been duly executed in the first instance. The contention was that it had been cancelled and revoked.

There were but few witnesses, and these had not much to tell. The first two or three were soon disposed of. John Brownlow came next. He had been a near neighbour of the late squire, and having had more frequent intercourse with him than any one else except Mr. Webb, was supposed to know something of his intentions.

Mr. Brownlow felt certain that the late Squire Thornton had more than once spoken to him of Arthur Neville as his heir. He had said something of the sort only a short time before his death; but the good farmer had been so accustomed to look upon that as a settled conclusion that he had not paid particular attention to his words, and could not recall them with any degree of precision. He had searched his brains so vigorously during the last few weeks, in anticipation of this trial, that he had got at last into a puzzled state of mind which hardly enabled him to distinguish between facts and impressions, or to draw the line with any certainty between memory and imagination; so that while anxious, in the cause of truth and justice, to give a distinct account of all that he knew, he was painfully aware that it would be a difficult thing to accomplish, and a dangerous thing, under a searching cross-examination, to attempt.

He gave his evidence clearly, however, when it came to the point, repeating as well as he could some snatches of conversation which he had had with the late squire, and avoiding everything which he did not feel sure about. He was about to retire, glad to think that they had done with him, though far from satisfied with himself, feeling that he had been over-cautious and had not made the best of his evidence, such as it was, when counsel for the other side rose to ask him a few questions. They were to the following effect.

"You are living at a place called Windy Gorse, I believe?"

"Yes, sir, I am."

"How long have you resided there?"

Mr. Brownlow told him.

"Before that you lived at a farm called the Goshen, or the Grange?"

"Yes, sir, I did."

"How long did you occupy that farm?"

"Five-and-twenty years, and my father before me just as long; and my grandfather before him."

"Ah! Quite a family inheritance!"

"It was almost the same thing."

"You never expected to be turned out of it?"

"No, sir, I did not."

"You were very fond of the Grange?"

"Yes. We called it the Goshen, though."

"Very good; it was really a Goshen to you, I dare say?"

Mr. Brownlow bowed assent.

"Did you leave the Goshen by your own desire or choice?"

"No, indeed. Certainly not."

"Is that place where you are now as good a farm as the Goshen?"

"Decidedly not."

"The land is inferior, and the house, and everything about it—quite a different place altogether?"

"It is," said Mr. Brownlow. "Yes; certainly."

Objection was here made to the course which the interrogations were taking; they were said by Arthur Neville's counsel to be irrelevant; but the judge did not interfere.

"You were very angry, of course, at being turned out of the house where you had lived so long to make way for a stranger?"

"I was, sir. I confess it."

"And you told Mr. Chamberlain plainly what you thought about it?"

"I did."

"You told him about Naboth's vineyard, and how he might expect to be requited for his covetousness?"

Mr. Brownlow began to get nervous and fidgety. He was conscious that, while resolving not to avenge himself, but rather to render good for evil, he had found a kind of satisfaction in the thought that Mr. Chamberlain would not escape without some sort of punishment or retribution for the injury he had done him. He had expected that the steward would have cause to repent that he had coveted his house and taken it, and yet he had not knowingly cherished any feeling of personal ill-will towards his oppressor. He had, in fact, as the reader already knows, left him to be dealt with by a Higher Power, in the belief that justice would be rendered. But how was he to explain all this in open court?

Some hasty words which Mr. Brownlow had uttered when he was smarting under his first sense of injury were repeated to him, and he could not but acknowledge them, and they were taken as evidence of an angry and vindictive feeling on his part.

Then it was made to appear that this feeling existed, not so much against the steward as his master. Mr. Henry Neville had been appealed to, and would not interfere. Mr. Neville might have forbidden the oppressive act, and had not done so. Young Mr. Brownlow, the farmer's son, had followed the squire to Germany, and had received from him a promise, which had ended in a fresh disappointment. For all these reasons it was assumed that Mr. Brownlow cherished feelings of enmity against the squire, and this inference was brought out with so much dexterity that poor Mr. Brownlow himself began almost to doubt whether he had not been animated by most unchristianlike, if not absolutely vindictive, sentiments against his landlord, and in trying to justify himself fell into great confusion.

More questioning of the same kind followed, and then Mr. Brownlow was asked about the notice to quit and the date of his leaving the Goshen. It came out that he had left that farm of his own accord after all, and a year earlier than he need have done. This fact being, as it seemed, in direct contradiction to the statement he had made just before, that he was ejected by Mr. Chamberlain, Mr. Brownlow in trying to maintain the truth of both assertions got strangely entangled, and lost both his self-possession and his temper.

Greater vexation was yet to come, for presently he was asked as to the nature of his own personal interest in the result of the present trial. It was then made to appear that he had not only stimulated Arthur Neville to set up his claim under the will, but had volunteered to assist him with money in prosecuting it. This, it was assumed, had been done from interested motives, with a view to the recovery of the house and farm from which he had been evicted.

"I don't see what all this has to do with the will,"

Mr. Brownlow said, at last, unable any longer to contain himself. "If I hated Mr. Neville-Thornton—which I don't—do you think I should be such a villain as to give false evidence in order to spite him? And if I felt disposed to spend a little money to establish an honest man in his rights, am I to be set down as a swindler, doing it for my own advantage?"

If Mr. Brownlow's indignant remonstrance met with any sympathy it could not be openly expressed in court, and he was silenced as quickly as possible and told to sit down, which he was very glad to do. Whatever value his evidence might have possessed was felt to have been much weakened by the facts which had been brought to light, and the interpretation which had been given to them. He was regarded as not only unfriendly to the elder brother Henry, but an attached friend of the claimant, and likely to be brought into closer alliance with him, and it was represented that he had volunteered from interested motives to assist him with funds in the prosecution of his claim.

At this point the court adjourned till the morrow. Mr. Brownlow and his friends went away talking, and before they parted company held another consultation. The lawyers were no more sanguine of success now than they had been; it was, of course, impossible to tell yet what the result might be, but it could not be said that the case had taken a good turn for them so far. It would most likely be decided early next day. The judge, it was well known, could see his way as well as any one, and in such cases as these would not be long in making up his mind upon the evidence. It was all in their favour having the case tried before a man who had the reputation of being able to discern the truth, however deeply hidden, and of going straight to the point in his decisions. They must be prepared for anything, and then they would not be disappointed. If only Mr. Webb, the old steward, had been alive, to tell them what he knew of his master's intentions, without any suspicion of *animus* on the one hand or of self-interest on the other, it might have made a great difference to them. It was a pity Mr. Webb could not have been subpoenaed, but of course he could not, so it was no use talking about it.

The mention of Mr. Webb set poor John Brownlow thinking again about his dream. The *animus* and interested motives attributed to himself had ruffled his temper, and he could not get over the annoyance which such imputations had caused him. There was, perhaps, more real *animus* just then in honest John Brownlow's heart than there had ever been before. At all events, he was more desirous than ever that Arthur Neville should gain his cause and his brother Henry lose it, though he did not think he could ever be induced personally to profit by the result, even if the award should be as he wished. Mr. Brownlow was restless, impatient, and unhappy. He regretted that he had encouraged Arthur Neville to embark in this action; it would cost a great deal of money, which Arthur could ill spare, and he would have to bear the loss alone. The brothers would, after this contest, be more widely alienated than before, and would look upon each other as enemies. These thoughts worried poor Mr. Brownlow, who was half inclined to look upon himself as the chief cause of all the litigation and ill-feeling which he at the same time deplored. But the severest smart of all arose from the treatment

which he had experienced at the hands of his opponents. They had charged him with contradicting himself, and would doubtless set him down as unworthy of credit. They had attributed to him feelings of revenge, an accusation to which his own unguarded remarks had laid him open. They had held him up to the public as a speculator, having an eye to his own profit while professing to seek justice for another; and for that accusation also he could not but admit that there was some appearance of reason.

"Truly," said Mr. Brownlow to himself, in the bitterness of his heart, "He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears."

Arthur Neville and some of his friends sat down to dinner together that day at his hotel. Mr. Fellowes, who had the ordering of the repast, evidently knew what he was about. He had expected the case would have been disposed of before dinner-time; if in their favour, then they would be in good spirits, and able to enjoy a liberal spread, with toasts and congratulations; and if against them, then they would want cheering up, and the price of a dinner would be as nothing compared with other costs which would have to be met. The table was well supplied, therefore, with all seasonable dainties, and there was no lack of anything that could stimulate their appetites or excite a cheerful disposition.

But Mr. Brownlow could not compose himself sufficiently to eat or drink, and could scarcely be persuaded even to take his place at the table. Michael, who was inclined to take a more sanguine and pleasant view of everything, especially at that moment, tried in vain to comfort his father and to inspire him with better hopes. Before the dinner was half over, Mr. Brownlow astonished the company by pushing back his chair and asking for a "Bradshaw."

"I think I shall go home to-night by the mail train," he said, after studying it a few moments.

"Home!" cried Fellowes, from his place at the head of the table, "impossible! you are bound to stay here till the end of the trial."

"I can get back by an early train to-morrow morning."

"You could not be here in time for the opening of the court."

"I shall not be wanted again, surely?"

"I hope not; but there's no knowing: here you must stay."

"I could not stand another cross-examination."

"It is not likely you will be recalled; but you must be at hand. We can't let you go."

"I can return by the seven o'clock train from Nobottle," he pleaded; "I will take care to be here in good time."

"Why, father," cried Michael, "you would be up all night; you would not reach home till midnight and would have to leave again before daybreak."

"I think I shall go," said Brownlow. "I must be off directly, too."

He moved towards the door as he spoke.

"What is it, father?" Michael asked; "what have you got in your head?"

The others were too busy with their dinner to take much notice of what was passing.

"I am going now, at once," was his answer.

"You may depend upon seeing me here again to-morrow morning in good time for the court; as far at least as it is in the power of any man to promise."

"You must not go," said Fellowes; "you really must not go."

"Good-bye," said Brownlow, waving his hand to the company with an air of quiet determination as he quitted the room.

Michael reluctantly left his dinner to follow his father, and accompanied him to the terminus. He saw him start by the mail train, but did not succeed in extracting so much as a hint from him as to the cause of his sudden determination.

"Shall you see any one at the Goshen?" Michael asked, shyly, as the train began to move.

"No: it is not probable. I shall have to leave home again soon after daylight; I shall see no one but your mother."

"Give my love to her, then," said Michael. "Good-bye."

ANTS.

"A LITTLE PEOPLE," BUT "EXCEEDING WISE."

BY THE REV. W. FARREN WHITE, M.A., VICAR OF STONEHOUSE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.

VII.

THEIR SYMPATHY.

I HAVE noticed how happily the members of the same community seem to live together. Harmony reigns everywhere supreme. The little people ever help each other when in need or difficulty. When one is hungry, another feeds it. When one is sickly, another ministers unto it. The smaller workers of not so stout a build or robust a habit as others are borne along in the loving grasp of their more stalwart neighbours. Sometimes I have seen members of a colony of *Formica rufa* marching in single file, each with a fellow-worker in its mandibles, the object of its sympathetic regard doubling itself up in order to give its benevolent companion as little inconvenience as possible in the transit. The sympathy of the little people sometimes assumes a most touching aspect. We

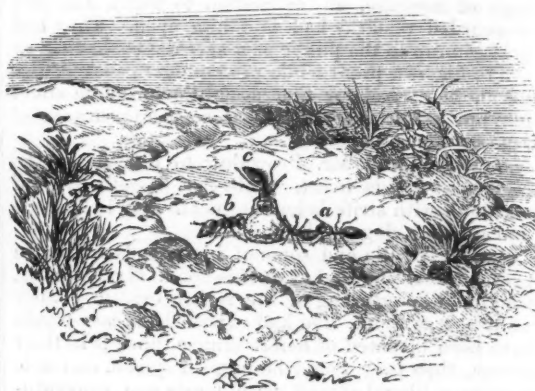
are told that the eminent entomologist, M. Latreille, once cut off the antennæ of an ant, and its companion, evidently pitying its sufferings, anointed the wounded part with a drop of transparent fluid from its mouth. When a burden is too heavy for one to carry, another will surely come to its succour and relieve its overtaxed powers by bearing a part of the weight; and if the commissariat department is to be strengthened and unwilling victims to be sacrificed for the maintenance of the colony, a foraging party unite to forward the common weal by dragging to the shambles the struggling captive. This I have often witnessed.

A remarkable instance of unselfish devotion and disinterested kindness occasioned me unmixed satisfaction at Shirley Common on the 9th of May, 1878. I had for the sake of observation disturbed a colony of

Formica sanguinea, the slave-making ant, of whose marvellous history more anon. When some of the little people got into difficulties and were likely to be buried alive beneath the ruin of their desolated home, to extricate them from the fallen *débris*, was it necessary for me to act the part of a friendly giant and deliver them from their impending doom? By no means. Their own tender-hearted companions were equal to the emergency; in fact, were it not for the perturbation and evident anxiety of those who were at liberty, I should myself have been utterly ignorant of the extent of the catastrophe and the imminence of the peril which threatened with destruction several hapless members of the interesting community. My attention was directed to a *sanguinea* which was working with great earnestness at a small hole in the sandy soil with which the nest was constructed, and which it was trying to enlarge, evidently with some determined object in view. I watched with much interest to see what that object was. The little labourer left its occupation but to return and pursue it with renewed vigour; again it left its work and again returned, and then went into an adjacent hole and reappeared after a careful investigation of the cavity. Without disturbing the indefatigable *sanguinea*, I carefully examined the hole and noticed the leg of an ant moving, which at once unveiled to me the mystery of my little friend's persistent movements. It was evidently endeavouring to extricate an imprisoned companion! Startled possibly at my presence, it moved away again, but its philanthropy overcoming its timidity, it soon came back and addressed itself to its benevolent task with redoubled energy. It loosened the earth above the quivering limb, and then went underneath and fairly extricated the anxious captive. The liberated ant, in the gladness of its heart, ran a little way from its prison, but, being wearied in consequence of the painful character of its enforced detention, it rested itself. The liberator immediately ran towards it, and, having ascertained doubtless that the object of its solicitude was uninjured, left it immediately, the latter continuing its rapid journey from the place of its captivity, while the former returned to the scene of its recent exploit to re-enact a similar act of kindness. In the second instance its difficulties were increased, since, as well as the superincumbent soil, a small stone rested on its unfortunate companion. Nothing daunted, it went actively to work, and did not cease until its unremitting efforts were crowned with complete success. It then dragged its friend out of its uncomfortable and perilous position, and removing it thus forcibly a few inches from its living grave, and ascertaining that it was in an exhausted condition, lifted it in its mandibles and carried it in triumph through the open door into the inner recesses of the common habitation.

I have every reason to believe that these are not uncommon illustrations of the sympathy and kindness of ants. In a formicarium of *sanguinea* which I established in my study, the same interesting scene has been enacted with heightened colour and more striking emphasis, since in this instance the unhappy victim of adverse circumstances seemed really hopelessly entangled by its surroundings. My frequent observation of their ways and doings has clearly proved that ants know, to their never-failing advantage, that union is strength, so that when one proves unequal to an allotted task, it seeks the co-operation of others, and the task is sure to be happily accom-

plished. And so it was in this case: concerted action wrought deliverance for the trembling captive in my formicarium.



ANTS RESCUING A BURIED COMPANION.

a drags the body out of the ground with its mandibles;
b and c simultaneously remove pellet of earth from its head.

When separated for a while from each other, the joy of the little people at meeting knows scarcely any bounds. I have heard of a separation having taken place between the members of a colony for four months. When the prisoners were released, and brought back by the friendly hand of their emancipator to the home of their childhood, they were recognised at once and welcomed with every demonstration of joy. Antennæ met antennæ in playful gladness.

THEIR LANGUAGE.

We are thus led on to observe that the ants have a language by which they communicate their ideas and wishes one to the other. It is a silent language, yet mutually comprehensible.

How quickly does alarm spread throughout the colony! Upon any imminent danger intelligence is immediately conveyed from chamber to chamber, from corridor to corridor, from the uppermost apartment to the lowest withdrawing-room of their extensive domicile, and in a very short time their treasures are removed out of harm's way. In my original formicarium I pressed the earth which covered a chamber full of pupæ, and on a later occasion I, by accident, shook the glass in which the ants had arranged their commodious habitation, and through the sides of which I could most conveniently watch their movements, and thus altered the form of another chamber used as a nursery, and crowded also with the young in their silken swathing-bands. In less than a minute in each case the pupæ were removed by the indefatigable nurses, the ants running about the while in the utmost consternation. In some nests, those especially of the yellow tribes (*Formica flava*), it has been noticed that sentinels are stationed in its avenues. When desirous to communicate the cause of fear or anger, they strike their heads against the members of their community in close proximity to them; these, in the same way, convey intelligence to others, until the whole colony is in a ferment, and measures of defence have been effectually taken.

MILITARY AND FORAGING EXPEDITIONS.

Some ants there are which engage in military expeditions, notably the Ecitons, or Processionary Ants of Brazil, though, as I shall have occasion later on to narrate, from personal experience, the military instinct is not confined to this species. These have been observed to send out spies, or, rather, a small party, detailed for the service. If the intelligence gathered by the scouts is favourable, the march commences in regular order, communications are maintained between rear and van, and during a contest, should occasion demand it, couriers are dispatched for reinforcements. The officers, who are distributed at regular intervals along the line of march, are distinguished by very large heads. They are never found carrying either the young or the spoils of war, which consist of all kinds of soft-bodied insects, such as locusts and cockroaches. There is one of these large-headed fellows before me as I write. It was kindly presented to me by Mr. F. Smith. The relative proportions in the size of the heads of the large and small workers is about similar to those of the heads of the large and small workers of the Madeira Ant which I discovered in the baker's shop in the Borough. I there ascertained that the large-headed workers are not employed in foraging expeditions for the purpose of furnishing the commissariat department, which is the province of the small workers. It may be that they belong to a military order, and that their duty is to defend the more peaceable members of the community. To give colour to this supposition, I may mention that though in the colonies of the British species we do not find any of these large-headed individuals, yet, as a rule, the size of the workers vary considerably, and in some it is much more marked than in others. As an instance, I would call attention to *Formica sanguinea*. In the nest of this ant we find some very large workers, and I have noticed that when the nest is disturbed, it is only these workers who make their appearance and stand in a threatening attitude at the entrances and in the environs of their dwelling, prepared to resent most determinedly all intrusion upon its privacy.

When quite a boy, I remember well how I used to rejoice in handling the fat maggots which I found in the folded leaves of rose-trees, and which developed, when undisturbed, into some dipterous insect, and I was accustomed to place these maggots near the entrance of an ants' nest, which was that of the common garden ant, *Formica nigra*. I then watched some of the colony examine the grub, and then hasten to convey the news of their prize to others, since numbers would sally forth, and, with united effort, would drag the unwilling prisoner into their castle to be devoured.

The antennæ, I have noticed, are the chief organs of speech. By their means useful discoveries are reported, the hungry ask for food, the nursing mothers gently tap their helpless babies when wishing them to open wide their mouths for the luscious and honeyed meal, and with them the military tribe are placed in marching order and rallied for a contest: and you should know, my readers, that these antennæ, besides being sensitive feelers and facile talking machines, serve also another purpose in the marvellous economy of this little people.

THE LITTLE PEOPLE AS FARMERS.

You must know that the ants are little farmers;

not only clearing the land round their dwellings, sowing the prepared soil with grain, reaping their corn when ripe, and gathering it into granaries for future use, as one species certainly does, and has in consequence justly merited the designation of the Agricultural Ant; but the little people possess beasts of nearly as many sizes and colours as are owned by country farmers and cattle breeders among the lords of the creation. In their farm-stock they have their gentle Jerseys—more familiarly known as "Aldernys"—yielding as they do a rich supply of milk, and their larger Guernseys similarly serviceable: their Shorthorns, with, as their name indicates, horns shorter than many other breeds, and, I may add, of beautiful structure, and with face of mild and pretty aspect; their South Devons, large and well favoured. Neither of these last two yield milk so plentifully or so rich as the first. Then they have what answers to the Midland home breeds, of snowy whiteness, which are usually kept within the precincts of their homestead, the property generally of the yellow tribes, though I have found that most other tribes or species of the little people possess them, though in less abundance. The ants' nests in the neighbourhood of Stonehouse abound with them; whether they yield milk or no is not yet known. It may be so, but after many years' observation I have seen nothing to justify this determination of their province in the economy of the little people. I would suggest that they act the part of scavengers; that their constant presence in the colony is not only favourable to their own development and maintenance, but serves also to promote the health and comfort of the little people themselves. These little cattle, or scavengers, have, strange to say, many legs, and look like woodlice. They have curiously formed horns, which move tremulously and rapidly as they traverse the passages of the formicarium. They are really crustaceans, and bear the euphonious name of *Platyarthus Hoffmannseggii*. The Devonshire breed have pretty horns, six legs, and short-winged cases, and belongs to the Coleopterous family *Brachelytra*, a family represented by many species among the *Myrmecophilous*, or ants'-nest beetles. They are characterised by short elytra, which entirely cover the folded wings, and long, narrow bodies, which they turn up when in the act of running. They, as a rule, are known to live in offal, manure, or under plants in a state of decay, and subsist on animal substances. My impression, therefore, is that they are also serviceable to the ants as scavengers, though they may also be used by them as cattle, since the species we are specially referring to has been known to supply a secretion between the rings of its abdomen, which the little people appropriate to their use as pleasant milk. This species is called *Atemeles emarginatus*, and Mr. Smith has informed me that he has found it in large numbers beneath the flat stones near Watersmeet, in the enchanting valley of the East Lyn, North Devon, in association with *Formica fusca* and the species of *Myrmica* which are common in the neighbourhood. Their Shorthorns, of a reddish-brown colour, possess the singular name of *Claviger testaceus*. They have short horns curiously fashioned, and their hide is of a tough texture, and their form is most quaint. The little people of the yellow complexion are fond of these, and hold them in exclusive possession. Mr. Smith, who presented me two specimens for my collection, assures us that they are the representatives of a rare exotic beetle, found nowhere in

Britain but in the colonies of this tribe of ants, who set great store by them. He disturbed a colony of *F. flava*, and discerned several representatives of *Claviger testaceus* perambulating the nurseries of the little people. As soon as danger threatened they were seized immediately by the anxious nurses, though the helpless babies were lying sprawling on the floor. I examined a specimen through a lens, and found it had a cavity on its back, in which is distilled by the little people a honeyed liquor, which is lapped up with avidity by the foster-mothers and given to the hungry children of the colony—at least, so says a French observer. I have unfeigned pleasure in mentioning that in the month of June last I was happy enough to discover *Claviger testaceus* in the neighbourhood of Clevedon, Somerset, under a stone on the pleasant slope of the Court Hill, overlooking the smiling valley of Walton. I captured two specimens in friendly association with a colony of *Formica flava*.

BEE TL ES IN AN TS' NESTS.

Wonderful to relate, there are about forty different species of beetles found in ants' nests, thirty-three of which are in my possession. Three of these are generally met with only in the larva state, notably the brilliant beetle *Cetonia aurata*, the splendour of whose metallic lustre, when it rests in the sunshine on the opening petals of a crimson rose, forms a sight not readily to be forgotten. The larva of an allied species, the *Cetonia aenea*, also finds a congenial habitat in the nests of ants. The third species which in the larva state inhabits the dwellings of our attractive little friends is the *Clythra four-punctata*, so called from the four spots which ornament the pale brown wing-cases of the perfect insect. The beetle itself has also been found in ants' nests. In a letter I received from Mr. Frederick Smith, bearing date 11th January, 1878, this accomplished naturalist says: "The larva of both *Cetonia* and *Clythra four-punctata* are found in nests of *F. rufa*. I once found the latter in larva and perfect condition in great numbers in the nests of the wood-ant in Yorkshire. In this part of the country (i.e., the London District) *Clythra* is not often found. I could have taken hundreds in Yorkshire. *Cetonia* I know is only occasionally found in the nests, and I look upon it as quite accidental its being there at all. *Cetonia aenea* is common in Scotland, and at Loch Rannoch the collectors took it in plenty, and occasionally found it in the nest of *F. rufa*. Setting aside, however, these three species, the remarkable fact remains that there are at least between thirty and forty different kinds of beetles found exclusively in the houses of the little people. Their special function it is not easy to determine. Some few, it may be, as already hinted at, are used as cattle, and, as before suggested, many may serve as scavengers; or the presence of a differing order of insects in ants' nests may imply, as Sir John Lubbock urges, that the little people are fond of domestic pets.

ANT-COWS.

Whatever doubt may exist as to the relation existing between the ants and the coleoptera and the crustaceans, as represented by *Platyarthrus Hoffmannseggii*, none can exist concerning their association with the aphides and cocci, popularly called plant-lice and scale insects, and both belonging to the order *Hemiptera*, an order which embraces also

the crimson cochineal insect of commerce, the brilliant lantern-fly, and the musical and classical cicadæ.

The aphides, which we may call the gentle Alderneys of the little people, furnish the sweetest milk in great abundance, and are known emphatically as ant-cows. In almost every nest of the Yellow Ant (*F. flava*) I came across in my Blackheath excursion—and remember it was the winter season—I found some of these little cattle; and such has been my experience in all subsequent investigations in this pleasant neighbourhood of Stonehouse, among the conical domiciles of *F. flava*. And though the British species of ants do not store grain for future consumption, as the Agricultural Ant of Texas, the Provident Ant of India, and the Harvesting Ants of the south of France, Italy, and Palestine, their wonderful habit of preserving and breeding their aphides is established as an unquestionable fact. The ant-cows I have found of many colours, both apple and olive green, grey, black, white, and delicate violet. Their bodies are either roundish or oval; they are found both winged and wingless. Their antennæ are sometimes long and tapering to a point, or shorter with cylindrical joints. They are provided with a rostrum, or tube, which is sometimes of great length; and when at rest it is folded against the under part of the abdomen. With this instrument they suck the sap of plants, by which they are nourished. They possess six legs, but are very slow in their movements. The punctures caused by their rostra sometimes so alters the form of the leaves and leaf-stalks they frequent, that excrescences or cavities are produced which serve to shelter them in large numbers. From this circumstance they are not inaptly termed "blight." They now and then, as I have already hinted, eject from their bodies the sweetest limpid drops, which is eagerly devoured by the ants when at hand. When such is not the case it falls upon the leaves of trees and shrubs they inhabit, and is known as honey-dew. The little people oftentimes visit trees and plants, on which the little cattle browse to satisfy their appetite and carry off the honeyed aliment to their hungry young. When I see ants on trees or rose-bushes, the lordly oak or the worthless thistle, I know the cause of their presence at once, and am almost sure to find the aphids on a careful search. Sometimes, however, the fruit itself forms a dainty and luscious meal to the little people, and sometimes the honey in the nectaries of flowers, and even the sweet and tender buds and petals of expanded blossoms. You must know, however, that the viscous liquid of the aphids is the principal support of many kind of ants, *F. flava* especially, and the liquid they can obtain without waiting the pleasure of their cows. How they do this I will next explain.

After the Storm.

THE freshening breeze with fairy fingers
Has dried the dewdrop from the rose;
And yonder jealous cloud that lingers,
Borrows strange beauty as it goes.
Ah! whispering wind and gleaming flower,
And sunny sky so soft and warm,
Your charm is strongest in the hour
After the storm.



The breeze has surely fragrance rarer
 When it succeeds the angry blast;
 The sky's broad azure seems the fairer
 That it awhile was overcast.
 Fearless above the rippling ocean
 The seagull swings her snowy form,
 Forgotten all its wild commotion
 After the storm.

If, then, these transient glories blending
 Have power to soothe the troubled breast,
 What must it be when life is ending,
 To gain that heaven which is our rest?
 Brief passage here of strife and sorrow,
 With aching heart and drooping form;
 For ever there the radiant morrow,
 After the storm.

S. E. G.



THE TROUBLES OF A CHINAMAN.

BY JULES VERNE.

CHAPTER XXII.—BACK TO SHANG-HAI.

THE Great Wall of China, constructed by the Emperor Tin-Chi-Hooang-Ti in the third century, is nearly 1,400 miles long, and extends from its two jetties in the Gulf of Leac-Tong to the province of Kan-Soo, where it degenerates into very insignificant dimensions. It is an uninterrupted succes-

it is still well preserved, and its battlements maintained in formidable array.

Neither army nor artillery defends this line fortification; Russian, Tartar, Kirghis, as much as the Chinaman, is free to pass its barrier; and the wall, moreover, fails to protect the empire from the visitation of the fine Mongolian dust which the north wind brings down some times as far as the capital.

After passing a miserable night on a heap of straw, Kin-Fo and Soon were next morning forced to take their way beneath the postern of these deserted bastions. They were escorted by a band of twelve men, who no doubt were in Lao-Shen's service. The guide who had hitherto conducted them had disappeared; it became more and more plain that it had been design and not chance that had thrown him in their way. The rascal's hesitation about venturing beyond the Great Wall was a mere ruse to avert suspicion, and he, too, beyond a question, had been acting under the orders of the Tai-ping.

"Of course you are taking me to Lao-Shen's camp?" Kin-Fo said to the leader of the escort.

"We shall be there in little more than an hour," answered the man.

It was a confirmation to Kin-Fo's conjecture, of which he did not stand in much need; yet it satisfied him. After all, was he not being conducted to the very place for which he had set out? And was he not in the way to get the chance of recovering the paper that kept his life in jeopardy? He maintained his composure perfectly, leaving all outward exhibition of alarm to poor Soon, whose teeth were chattering with the most abject fear.

Beyond the wall the troop did not continue its journey along the great Mongol road, but diverged at once into a steep pathway to the right through the mountainous district of the province, the guard so carefully surrounding their prisoners that any

attempt to escape, even had they been inclined to venture it, would have been out of the question.

Their advance was as rapid as the steepness of the road would allow, and in about an hour and a half, on turning the corner of a projecting eminence, they came in sight of a building in a half-ruined



THE SECRET TRIBUNAL.

sion of double ramparts, defended by bastions fifty feet high and twenty wide; the lower part is of granite, the upper of bricks, and it boldly follows the outline of the mountain tops on the Russo-Chinese frontier. On the Chinese side the wall is now in a very bad condition, but on the side facing Manchuria

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condition; it was an old bonze-house, built upon the brow of a hill, and a curious monument of Buddhist architecture. It did not seem at all likely that any worshippers would now be found to frequent a temple in such a deserted part of the frontier; but it was a situation not badly suited for a highwayman, and if Lao-Shen had settled there, he had made a judicious selection for himself.

In reply to a question of Kin-Fo, the leader of the escort told him that it was Lao-Shen's residence.

"Take me to him at once," said Kin-Fo.

"We have brought you on purpose," answered the man.

Having been deprived of their firearms, Kin-Fo and Soon were brought into a wide vestibule that had formed the atrium of the ancient temple. Here were about twenty fierce-looking men, all armed and attired in the picturesque costume of highwaymen. With the utmost calmness Kin-Fo passed through the double row they formed on his entrance, Soon having to be pushed forcibly by his shoulders.

The farther end of the vestibule opened on to a staircase cut in the solid wall, and leading into the heart of the mountain to a crypt beneath the temple by windings so complicated that no one unaccustomed to the place could have found his way.

Lighted by torches carried by the escort, the prisoners were conducted down thirty steps, then for about a hundred yards along a narrow passage, until they found themselves in a large hall, which the additional glare of more torches still left very dim. Massive pillars, carved with grotesque heads of the monsters of Chinese mythology, supported the low arches of the roof, which sprang from their keystones with spreading mouldings.

A low murmur that ran through the hall made Kin-Fo aware that it was not deserted; so far from that, its recesses were filled with men, as if the entire confraternity of Tai-pings had been summoned to some special ceremony.

At the extreme end of the crypt, on a wide stone platform, stood a man of enormous stature; he bore all the appearance of a president of some secret tribunal; three or four attendants stood close beside him, as if acting the part of his assessors, and at a sign from him they gave orders that the prisoners were to approach.

"Here is Lao-Shen," said the leader, pointing to the gigantic figure on the platform.

Stepping forward with firm step, Kin-Fo, in the most direct manner, entered upon the business.

"I am Kin-Fo," he began. "Wang has been your old comrade and confederate. I gave Wang a certain paper with a certain contract. Wang has transferred that paper to you. I come to tell you that that contract is not valid now, and I demand the paper at your hands."

The Tai-ping did not stir a muscle; had he been of bronze he could not have been more rigid.

"You can demand your own price," continued Kin-Fo, and then waited for an answer.

But no answer came.

Kin-Fo went on. "I am ready to give you a draft on any bank you choose. I am prepared to guarantee its payment to any messenger you send.



"LA-001"

Name the sum for which you surrender the contract."

Still no answer.

Kin-Fo repeated his request more emphatically than before.

No answer.

"Five thousand taels shall I offer?"

Still silence.

"Ten thousand?"

Lao-Shen and all around him were as mute as the statues.

Kin-Fo grew anxious and impatient.

"Do you not hear me?"

Lao-Shen bowed his head gravely.

"I will give you thirty thousand taels. I will give you all you would get from the Centenarian. I must have the paper. Name—only name the price."

The Tai-ping stood mute as before.

Wild with excitement, Kin-Fo clenched his hands, and dashed forwards to the platform.

"What price will you take?"

"Money will not buy that paper," at last said the Tai-ping, sternly; "you have offended Buddha by despising the life that Buddha gave you, and Buddha will be avenged. Death alone can convince you of the worth of the gift of life which you have esteemed so lightly."

The voice with which this sentence of decision was uttered prohibited any reply; and even had Kin-Fo been anxious to say a word in his own defence, the opportunity was not afforded him. A signal was given, and he was forthwith seized, carried out, and thrust into a cage, the door of which was immediately locked. In spite of the most pitiable howlings, Soon was subjected to the same treatment.

"Ah, well!" said Kin-Fo to himself, when he was left to his solitude, "I suppose those who despise life deserve to die!"

Yet death was not so near as he imagined. Hours passed on and execution was delayed; he began to speculate what terrible torture the Tai-ping might have in store for him. After a while he was conscious that his cage was being moved, and he felt that it was being placed upon some vehicle. Evidently he was to be conveyed to a distance. For nearly eight hours there was the tramp of horses, and the clatter of weapons carried by an escort, and he was tumbled and jolted about most unmercifully. Then came a halt. Shortly afterwards the cage was removed to another conveyance; it was not long before it began rolling and pitching; there was the noise, too, of a screw, and the ill-fated tenant was aware that he was on board a steamer.

"Are they going to throw me overboard?" he wondered; "well, it will be a mercy if they spare me any worse torture!"

Forty-eight hours elapsed. Twice a day a little food was introduced into the cage by a trap-door, but he never could see the hand that brought it, and never could get a reply to the questions that he asked.

He had plenty of time to think now. He had been years and years and felt no emotion; surely he was not destined to die without emotion; he had had enough and more than enough during the last few weeks; he must die now, but he had the intensest longing to die in the light of day; he shuddered at the prospect of being cast unawares into the deep sea; oh, that he could live, if it were only to see once more his beloved La-oo! To see her no more; the thought was terrible!

The voyage came to an end; he was yet alive; but surely his last moments must have come; here was the crisis; every minute was a year,—a hundred years!

To his unbounded surprise, he felt his cage carried along and deposited upon *terra firma*; he heard a commotion outside, and in a few minutes the door was opened; he was seized, and a bandage fastened tightly over his eyes, and he was pushed violently along. Finding after a time that the steps of the men who were driving him along began to hesitate, he concluded that they had arrived at the scene of his execution, and shouted out,

"Hear my last petition. I have but one request; unbandage my eyes; let me see the daylight; let me die as a man that can face death!"

"Grant the criminal the boon he asks," said a solemn voice, severely, in his ears; "let the bandage be untied."

The bandage was removed.

Kin-Fo quivered with amazement. Was he dreaming? What was the meaning of all this?

Before him was a table sumptuously spread. Five guests were smiling, as if they were expecting his arrival. Two seats were still unoccupied.

"Friends, friends!" he cried in the bewilderment of his excitement; "tell me, am I mad?"

A few moments restored him to composure, and he looked around; there was no mistake; before his eyes were Wang and the four friends of his early youth, Yin-Pang, Hooal, Pao-Shen, and Tim, with whom just two months previously he had feasted in the cabin of the yacht on the Pearl River at Canton. Here he was in the dining-room of his own yamen at Shang-Hai.

"Speak, Wang, and tell me," he cried, "what means all this? Is it you or your ghost?"

"It is Wang himself," replied the philosopher, smiling.

Kin-Fo looked puzzled. Wang then went on, "You have come home again after a rough lesson. You owe that lesson to me. It has been my doing that you have had so much to bear. But it has been for your good, and you must forgive me."

More perplexed than ever, Kin-Fo looked at him, but said nothing.

"All," proceeded Wang, "is soon explained. I undertook, at your solicitation, the task of putting you to death, just in order that the commission should not be given to other hands. I knew, sooner than even you did, that the report about your ruin and the loss of your property was all false; and I knew, in consequence, that though you then wanted to die, you would very soon want to live. I have made my former comrade, Lao-Shen, my confidant. Lao-Shen is now one of the most faithful of the friends of the Government; he has long since submitted to established rule, but in this affair he has co-operated with me, and your own experience of the last few days tells you how; he has brought you face to face with death, and thus has taught you the lesson I determined you should learn of the value of life. My heart bled for you at the trouble and suffering you had to endure; it was a hard and bitter thing to me to abandon you to what you would have to undergo; but I knew there was no other, no easier way in which you could be made successful in the pursuit of happiness."

Wang could say no more. Kin-Fo had caught him in his arms, and was pressing him to his heart.

"Poor Wang!" he said, "what pain you have suffered on my account! And besides, what risks you have run! I shall never forget that day at the Bridge of Palikao."

The philosopher laughed, almost merrily.

"Yes; it was a cold bath for any one; but for a man of fifty-five, in a burning sweat after a long chase, it was rather a trial both for his years and for his philosophy. But never mind, no harm came of it. A man never moves so quickly as when he is doing good for others."

"For others," repeated Kin-Fo; "yes, I do not doubt it; the true secret of happiness is to be working for the good of others."

The conversation, which was becoming grave, was interrupted by the introduction of Soon. The poor fellow was looking as miserable as might be expected after a sea-voyage of nearly two days; it would be difficult to describe exactly the hue of his complexion,

but he expressed himself unboundedly glad to find himself in his master's home again.

After releasing Wang from his embrace Kin-Fo went round and affectionately shook hands with each one of the guests.

"What a fool I have been all my life!" he said.

"But you are going to be a perfect sage henceforth," replied Wang.

"My first act of wisdom, then," Kin-Fo began, "must be to set my affairs in order. I shall not be content until I have that little document again in my possession which has been the cause of all my tribulations. If Lao-Shen is in possession of it he must give it up in case it should fall into unscrupulous hands.

There was a general smile.

"Our friend's adventures," said Wang, "have most undoubtedly wrought a change in his character; he is no longer the indifferent mortal he was."

"But you do not tell me," persisted Kin-Fo, "where that written contract is; nothing can satisfy me till I have seen it burnt and its ashes scattered to the winds."

"You seem in earnest," said Wang.

"Most seriously," replied Kin-Fo. "But where is the paper? Has Lao-Shen given it back?"

"Lao-Shen never had it."

"Then you have it yourself. You will not refuse to restore it to me? I suppose you do not want to retain it as a guarantee against the repetition of my folly?"

"Certainly not," said Wang; "but it is not in my possession; still more, it is not at my disposal."

"What!" cried Kin-Fo, "you do not mean that you have been imprudent enough to entrust it to other hands?"

"I confess I have parted with it," Wang replied.

"How? why? when? to whom?" exclaimed Kin-Fo in his impatience.

"I gave it up—" continued Wang, calmly.

"To whom? tell me," interrupted Kin-Fo.

"You do not give me time to tell you; I gave it up to one who is willing to restore it to you."

And almost before he had finished speaking La-oo stood in front of him holding the paper in her delicate fingers. Concealed behind a curtain, she had heard all that passed, and delayed no longer to come forward.

"La-oo!" cried Kin-Fo, and was hastening to clasp her to his bosom.

But she drew back, as if she were going to retreat as mysteriously as she had appeared.

"Patience, patience!" she said; "business before pleasure; does my brother know and acknowledge his own handwriting?"

"Too well," he answered; "there is not the second fool in the world who ever would have written it."

"Is that your real opinion?" she asked.

"My real opinion," said Kin-Fo.

"Then you may burn the paper," said La-oo; "and therewith annihilate the man who wrote it."

With the most beaming of smiles she handed him the paper which had so long been the torture of his life; he held it to a candle, not removing his eyes from it until it was consumed.

Then turning to his promised bride, he pressed her lovingly to his bosom.

"And now," he said, "you will come and preside at our reunion here. I feel as if I can do justice to the feast."

"And so do we," rejoined the guests.

A few days later and the term of the court mourning had expired. With even greater lavishness than before, the ceremony was arranged, and the marriage took place immediately.

The affection of the loving couple was unalterable; prosperity awaited them throughout their future life; and only by a visit to the yamen in Shang-Hai could the measure of their mutual happiness be realised.

THOMAS À KEMPIS.

FACSIMILE REPRINT OF THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT.

FEW works of devotion have obtained the celebrity which attaches to "The Imitation of Christ," by Thomas à Kempis. The book bears the impress of the age in which it was written, and of the church to which its author belonged; yet it has survived through many centuries, and been accepted in many communions. It was long ago translated into all the European languages, and into Arabic and Chinese, if not into other tongues of remoter people. As an illustration of its varied influence, we may recall the fact that John Wesley himself prepared and issued an edition. The introspective type of piety which it represents is not greatly in favour in these busier times; but the treatise will always have religious value, not only from the saintliness of its purpose, but from the knowledge of human nature which it displays. We are concerned, however, in this brief notice only with its literary interest. The last edition issued has taken the autograph form, being a careful reproduction of the original manuscript, for which the public is indebted to Mr. Elliot Stock, whose facsimile series of standard books is now well-known.* Prefixed to this curious little volume is an introduction by M. Charles Ruelens, the Keeper of the Manuscripts in the Royal Library, Brussels, where the original copy of Thomas à Kempis is still preserved. This autograph was finished and completed in the year 1441. Before the close of the fifteenth century numberless manuscripts had been made by monks and scribes, and at least eighty editions issued from the press between the date of that printed at Ausburg, about 1470, and the year 1500. Since then, many thousands of editions have appeared in many lands and in divers tongues. M. Ruelens asserts that no book, save the Holy Bible, has been so often reproduced. We refer the curious in such questions to his introduction for the literary history of the manuscript. It is interesting, however, to note that the earliest translation into English was made in 1502 by Dr. William Atkinson, Canon of Windsor.

The authorship of the "De Imitatione Christi" has been often debated. Thomas à Kempis (so called from Kempen, where he was born, near Cologne) was a canon of the monastery of Mount St. Agnes. He employed much time in transcription of the Bible and other works, being an excellent copyist. The four books of the Imitation form part of a collection of pious and ascetic treatises in his handwriting. The question was raised, some time after

* The Imitation of Christ: being the Autograph Manuscript of Thomas à Kempis, De Imitatione Christi, reproduced in Facsimile from the Original preserved in the Royal Library at Brussels. With an Introduction by Charles Ruelens, Keeper of the Department of Manuscripts, Royal Library, Brussels. London: Elliot Stock.

lines appears to have been the instrument of a vigorous nature. Thomas à Kempis died at the age of ninety. The same minute care is to be found in other manuscripts of the middle age. The economies of space are characteristic of the days when paper was a scarce commodity.

AFGHAN PROVERBS.

THE following proverbs were some of them collected in India, but are chiefly drawn from a work by Mr. Thorburn, of Bannu, on the Afghan frontier, who while engaged in the civil duties of his district found time to add to our collection of folklore. They show that human nature is much the same under every guise, and that tribes accounted barbarous have a good deal of common sense.

1. Do not put your fingers into every hole. That is, Be not meddlesome. In India people are often stung by snakes in their holes.
2. Though the cow be black its milk is white. That is, Judge not by outward appearances.
3. As the mother is, so is the daughter; as the mill is, so is the flour.
4. The fingers will not hide the sun from view.
5. He says to the thief, Steal; to the householder, Be on your watch. That is, he serves two masters.
6. Be not too sweet, else men will eat you; be not too bitter, else they will loathe you.
7. The ungrateful son is a wart on the father's face; to cut it is pain, to leave it is a blemish.
8. Mountain does not go to meet mountain, but man meets his fellow. This proverb runs through English, Latin, Russ, Persian.
9. Though the mallet be old, it is strong enough to break the pitcher.
10. Wealth is a Hindu's beard. The Hindus must shave on the death of relations, who are numerous. The proverb is equivalent to the Bible, "Riches have wings."
11. Though a mother be meat, it is not lawful for the son to eat it.
12. Though I speak not, my broken leg will.
13. If a man tells you a dog has carried away your ear, would you go after the dog, or put your hand to your ear? By which we are taught to examine first, and not trust reports.
14. He who was far from Mecca became a pilgrim; he who lived near Mecca did not become one.
15. The ass in trying to get loose lost his ears.
16. I have just returned from the battle, and you are telling me about it. That is, you are a theorist.
17. To lie is to jump from a house-top.
18. The river cannot be emptied by a cup.
19. The river cannot be made muddy by a stone that is thrown.
20. She commits the sin and curses Satan for it.
21. The monkey lapped up the curds and smeared the kid's mouth with them.
22. Though the food was another's, the stomach was your own.
23. The widow got neither religion nor a husband. She first remained unmarried, but giving that up she tried for a husband, but was too old, so between two stools she fell to the ground.
24. When sleep overpowers it needs no pillow; when the heart is in love it needs not beauty.

25. He is brother to the monkey, he tears open his wound.

26. The sleep of kings is on an ant-hill.

27. The day over, its shadows turn, east and west, so life is shifting.

28. I'll rob you, then the load of onions won't be on your head. This proverb rebukes the pretence to do a favour while injuring.

29. The cat in her dreams sees rats. That is, the world follows one into solitude.

30. When the birds were taxed the bat said, "I am a rat." When the rats were taxed the bat said, "I am a bird."

31. The gun smashes the mark, it does not weep. That is, everything has its proper use.

32. When one hand is oiled the other becomes so from it.

33. Do not put your feet into thin boots.

34. Until you heat iron you will not lengthen it. That is, Punishment is necessary.

35. Do not wash the bottom of the pitcher. Useless labour, it will soon get dirty again.

36. Don't look at the cock on his dunghill, but on your plate. Judge not by appearance, but by worth.

37. A snake bites for fear of his life. *Sic* English, "Tread on a worm it will turn again."

AFGHAN RIDDLES.

1. Its head is in man, its end is in the ground, its middle in the ox.

2. 'Tis rubbed on stone, it's found on the forehead, its home is in air.

3. It issues from an orifice and enters one; eyes neither see it nor hand catches it; sometimes it becomes a rose in the garden; sometimes it falls like a thunderbolt.

4. 'Tis not on earth nor yet in heaven; 'tis not man nor animal; on a soft place is its home; every one wonders at it.

5. From the living a corpse is born; living it leaves its corpse, and its corpse is broken in two.

6. Without wings or bones it flutters like a bird; fair maids rejoice at it; its song causes gladness; it spins round like a dancer. Ignorant men know it not.

7. Like a staff in look, it seems a flag; on its loin is its pouch; 'tis ready for battle.

Varieties.

THE SUN'S PATH THROUGH SPACE. — The vast system, of which the earth is a member, is hastening on, with meteors, comets, satellites, asteroids, sun, from the southern rich region of stars—the neighbourhood of Canis Major, Columbo, and Lepus—to the northern rich region, where the chief splendour is gathered in Cygnus. We are speeding along a relatively barren path, from a rich past to a glorious future, at a rate of 154,185,000 miles the year; we are circling a centre in the direction of Aleyone, a star of the Pleiades, of which Job (xxxvii. 31) said long ago, "Canst thou bind the sweet influence of Pleiades?" Round some central sun, or central void without any preponderate mass, or in a great vortex-ring, we move as parts in a scheme of movement too wondrous and complicated to be as yet interpreted by astronomers, and we complete the course in about 18,200,000 years. As the earth and other planets are carried on, their orbits continually advance; the earth, as beheld from the sun, is but a dust-mote in his beams; and the actual path, year by year, is through fresh space. Viewing the sun, as among other suns, and the planetary orbits,

as seen from the fixed stars, those orbits are little more than a point, and the sun is invisible. What unknown possibilities lie in that measureless extension of space where worlds are sprinkled as dust of gold, for the display of intellectual and moral life! Our sun and his fellow suns are connected with groups of minor suns, with clusters of star-dust, with masses of star-mist, with whorls and convolutions of nebulous matter, sometimes combined in vast spherical gatherings of worlds. There are orbs lying in such close order that we think great brilliancy is in those heavens; but, after stricter examination, they are found wide apart as the inconceivable distance between our sun and his nearest fellow. Farther off still, are stars whose rays take thousands, perhaps millions, of years to reach the earth. The arrangement is of striking order, and the possibility of it having sprung up by chance is so ridiculously small that Quetelet calculates it as nothing. There is a multiplicity of worlds in infinite space, and a countless succession of worlds in infinite time, with point or base of gravity regulated by the weight and motion of all. Great and glorious is the Garden of God. The suns are planted in flowering beds of many splendid colours. The planets interweave in sparkling germination, various foliage, blooming fecundity of borders. Dark suns, weird places, cavernous chaotic regions, shadow forth the desolation of eternal wintry fields. There are ridges and clusters, rows and shelvings, with spirals and streams, in celestial depths where are disclosed the signs of as yet unthought of laws. Scripture holds closely to mundane affairs, yet the very ground on which religion and morality are based, is that we move in a wider circle than the physical; that there are spiritual beings, good and evil, that enter our firmament and concern themselves with the destiny of our race; and that we, after a rational service in duty and trial, shall enter a vast congregation of pure spirits, who are further within the circle of Divine Power, and nearer to the manifestation of Divine Glory. Meanwhile, God guides us by His hand, and in His heart has sympathy. Life's trials cast down, but not destroy; blinding lightning may rend the firmament, yet awake no fear; and sickness, touching our body with premonition of the grave, brings conviction that we shall live again. Like the suns and stars, kindled into splendour from previous worlds, our restored spirits, with frames refashioned out of former elements and purified, will evermore live on, and find a starry pathway to the Eternal Throne.—“*The Supernatural in Nature*,” by President Reynolds, of *Sion College*.

SISTER DORA.—Of the remarkable lady, Dorothy Pattison, known more widely as “Sister Dora,” a memoir appears in the “Sunday at Home” for June. Her biographer, Miss Lonsdale, has since been unfortunately mixed up in a controversy as to the nursing in hospitals by regular sisterhoods less under control than were the old style of nurses. The indiscretion of Miss Lonsdale in writing an article in the “XIXth Century,” while connected with Guy’s Hospital, has been resented. But the hostility to Miss Lonsdale hardly justifies the attack on her book as a “biographical romance.” We may mention now that our knowledge of Sister Dora’s character and work was obtained from friends in Walsall, who did not even know her origin or real name, but who testified to her worth long before the published book (Kegan Paul and Co.) had made her name as justly renowned as that of Florence Nightingale.

PRINCE ALBERT’S HABITS OF STUDY.—“Like most men who have done great things in the world, the Prince got to his work early, and had made good progress with it before other people were stirring. Summer or winter, he rose as a rule at seven, dressed, and went to his sitting-room, where in winter a fire was burning, and a green German lamp ready lit. He read and answered letters, never permitting his vast correspondence to fall into arrear, or prepared for her Majesty’s consideration drafts of answers to her ministers on any matters of importance. Not feeling sure of the idiomatic accuracy of his English, he would constantly bring his English letters to the Queen to read through, saying, ‘Lese recht aufmerksam, und sagen wenn irgend ein Fehler da ist.’ (‘Read carefully, and tell me if there be any faults in these!’) Or in the case of drafts on political affairs, he would say, ‘Ich hab’ Dir hier en Draft gemacht, lese es mal! Ich dachte es wäre recht so!’ (‘Here is a draft I have made for you. Read it! I should think this would do!’) He kept up this habit to the close of his life; and his last memorandum of this description—a paper of the greatest importance, to which we shall hereafter have occasion particularly to advert—he brought to the Queen on the 1st of December, 1861, at 8 a.m., having risen to write it, ill and suffering as he was, saying as he gave it, ‘Ich bin so schwach, ich habe kaum die Feder halten können.’ (‘I am so weak I have scarcely been

able to hold the pen.’) From eight o’clock till breakfast-time was either spent in the same way or in the perusal of fresh relays of despatches and official papers, which had been previously opened and read by the Queen, and placed by her ready for his perusal beside his table in her sitting-room.”—*Sir Theodore Martin’s “Life of the Prince Consort.”*

PERISHABLE PIGMENTS.—Mr. Holman Hunt has called attention to the perishable nature of the colours used by modern painters. He proposes a special society for the investigation of this matter, though it seems rather to be the business of the rich Royal Academicians, who retain a Professor of Chemistry for this and other services. A painter in the early ages mixed his own colours, or superintended his assistants and pupils in the process. Every studio was a laboratory also. The painter who as a pupil had learnt the mystery, taught it to his pupils in his turn, and they to theirs. There might be secrets, but they were secrets intrusted to successive generations of depositaries. Fifty or even a hundred years after a painting had left its painter’s hands the recollection might easily survive of the composition of the colours used in creating it. To the irreparable loss of art, the canvases of the greatest English masters witness against English painters’ ignorance of the laws of the materials in which they work. Of three-quarters of Sir Joshua’s perfect portraits the present generation inherits only pallid ghosts. None now can know the original simple sweetness of Constable’s breezy landscapes. Not a few of Turner’s revelations of a superb imagination, articulate only on canvas, have faded out of harmony before living eyes. That the existence of English paintings is not more generally fleeting is not the merit of their authors. They know the instantaneous effects they produce, and how they produce them. They can give no warranty what effects the colours they use will choose to produce for themselves fifty or even twenty years hence.

SUNDAY MORNING.—“A lovely, peaceful morning, the atmosphere transparent, the landscape clear and pure, with its white houses, and fields and trees. Glorious day! the only day on earth the least like heaven. It is the day of peace which follows the day of battle and victory. ‘And all this mighty heart is lying still,’ the forge silent, the cotton-mill asleep, the steamers moored, the carts and waggons gone to the warehouse, the shops closed, man and beast enjoying rest, and all men invited to seek rest in God! How solemn the thought of the millions who will this day think of God, and pray to God, and gaze upon eternal things; on sea and land, in church and chapel, on sick bed and in crowded congregations! How many thousands in Great Britain and Ireland will do this! Clergy praying and preaching to millions. This never was the device of either man or devil. If it was the ‘device of the Church,’ she is indeed of God. May the Lord anoint me this day with His Spirit!”—*Dr. Norman Macleod*.

STRUGGLE WITH AN OCTOPUS.—Mr. Smale, the Government diver who was attacked by a large octopus, or devil-fish, while at work recently on the bed of the Moyne river, at Belfast, in the colony of Victoria, gave this account of the affair:—“Having thrust my arm into a hole, I found it was held by something, and the action of the water was stirring up the loose clay, and therefore I could not see distinctly for a few minutes; but when it did clear away I saw to my horror the arm of a large octopus entwined around mine like a boa constrictor, and just then he fixed some of his suckers on the back of my hand, and the pain was intense. I felt as if my hand was being pulled to pieces, and the more I tried to take it away the greater the pain became. I had the greatest difficulty in keeping my feet down, as the air rushed along the interior of my dress and inflated it; and if my feet had got uppermost I should soon have become insensible, held in such a position; and also, if I had given the signal to be pulled up, the brute would have held on, and the chances would have been that I should have had a broken arm. I had a hammer by me, but could not reach down to use it on the brute. There was a small iron bar about five feet from me, and with my foot I dragged this along until I could reach it with my left hand. And now the fight commenced, and the more I struck him the tighter he squeezed, until my arm got quite benumbed. After a while I found the grip begin to relax a little, but he held on until I had almost cut him to pieces, and then he relaxed his hold from the rock, and I pulled him up. I was completely exhausted, having been in that position for over twenty minutes. I brought the animal up, or rather a part of it. We laid him out, and he measured over eight feet across, and I feel perfectly convinced that this fellow could have held down five or six men.”